

Step 1

Learn More About Asthma Medicines

Some asthma medicines are taken every day, while some are taken only when asthma gets worse. Ask your doctor or clinic which medicines are right for you. Be sure you know how and when to take the medicine.

If your doctor gives you an inhaler, make sure you know how to use it. If you have trouble using your inhaler, ask your doctor or pharmacist if a spacer tube is right for you.

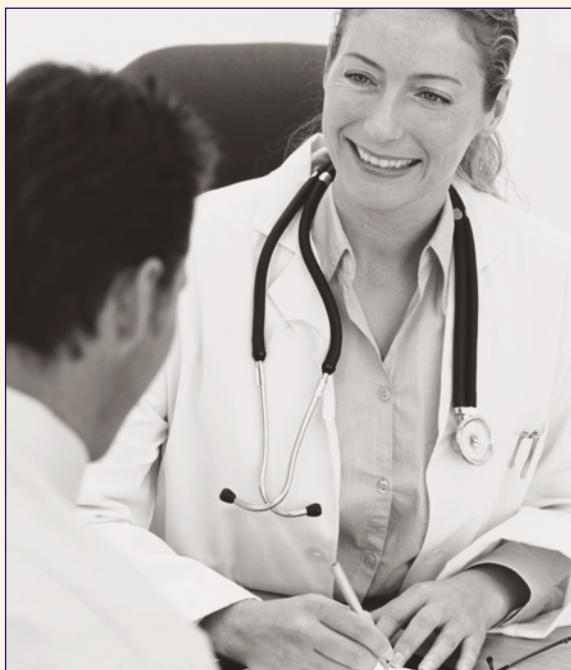


Step 2

Prepare an Asthma Action Plan with Your Doctor

An Asthma Action Plan tells you how your doctor wants you to treat your asthma.

- Ask your doctor to fill out an Asthma Action Plan with you.
- Know when to take your medicines or to give medicine to your child. Know what to do if your asthma gets worse.
- Review the plan with your doctor at each visit.



Step 3

Get a Flu Shot

Ask your doctor about getting a flu shot. It is important for people with asthma to stay healthy. The vaccine does not cause the flu. Flu shots are paid for by your Illinois healthcare plan.

Step 4

If You Smoke, Quit Now

Smoking, or being around people who smoke, makes asthma worse. Do not allow smoking in your home. Be sure no one smokes around you or your child. If you smoke, ask your doctor to help you quit. You can also call the **Illinois Quitline at 1-866-784-8937 (TTY: 1-800-501-1068)**.

Step 5

Avoid Asthma Triggers

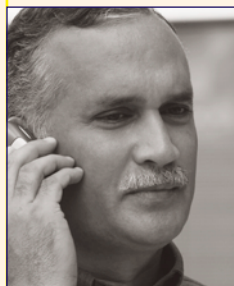
A trigger is anything that makes asthma or breathing worse. Many people with asthma also have allergies to things like dust mites, pets, certain foods, pollen, mold or cockroach droppings. These things can trigger asthma attacks. Here are some ways to help avoid asthma triggers.

- **Vacuum often.** If someone else cannot vacuum for you, wear a dust mask while vacuuming. Keep children with asthma away from the room being vacuumed.
- **Wash clothes,** sheets and blankets each week in hot water. Also wash your pillowcases every week.
- **Wash your hair** or an asthmatic child's hair before going to bed.
- **Control cockroaches.** Keep all food out of bedrooms. Keep food and garbage in tightly closed containers.



- If you have a pet and it has to be indoors, keep your pet out of bedrooms at all times. **Bathe your pet every week** and wash your hands after touching your pets.
- When pollen and mold counts are high, keep your windows closed. Stay indoors in the middle of the day.
- Avoid food, including beer and dried fruits, which have **sulfites** in them. Read food labels.

For More Information



Call **1-800-973-6792** to talk to a nurse at **Your Healthcare Plus™** if you have any questions or anytime you are sick or hurt. The nurses are always available and the call is free.

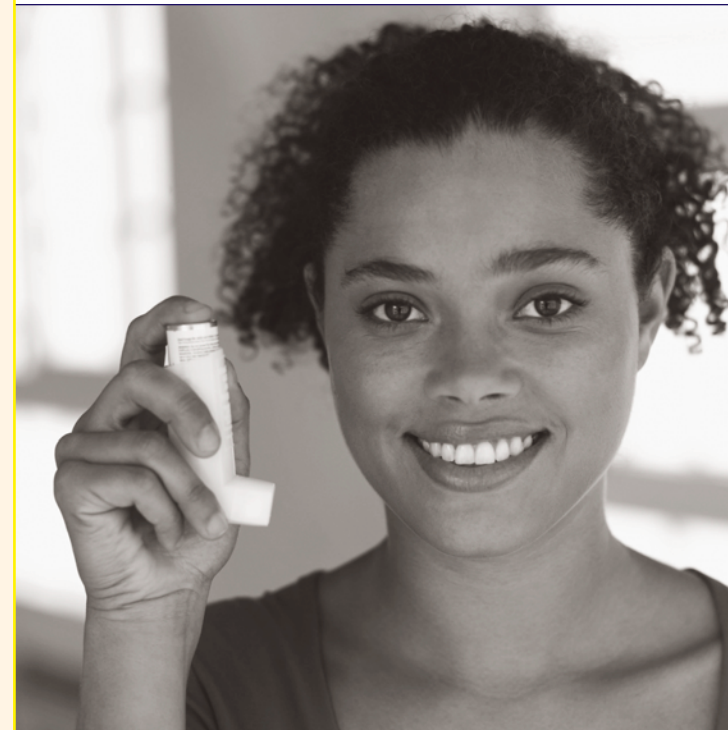
If you use a TTY, call 1-888-317-2697 or your local Telecommunications Relay Service to talk to a nurse.

To find out more about Your Healthcare Plus online, go to **www.yourhealthcareplus.com**.

State of Illinois
Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor
Department of Healthcare
and Family Services
Barry S. Maram, Director



5 Easy Steps to Help Control Your Asthma



Your **Healthcare Plus™**

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Healthcare and
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